

20,000 immediate jobs . . . without one single dollar of government assistance.

The general president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters said:

The Keystone Pipeline project will offer working men and women a real chance to earn a good wage and support their families in this difficult economic climate.

Consider the remarks of the general president of the Laborers' International Union of North America. He said:

This project . . . is not just a pipeline, but . . . a lifeline for thousands of desperate working men and women.

House Democrats also recognize the importance of this Keystone XL Pipeline. This summer, 47 House Democrats voted in favor of the bill to require a decision on the pipeline by November 1. On October 19, 22 House Democrats wrote a letter to the President. This is what they told President Obama:

America . . . cannot afford to say no to this privately funded . . . jobs-creating infrastructure project.

They went on to say:

It is in our national interest to have a Presidential Permit issued for the Keystone XL Pipeline as soon as possible.

Senate Democrats also support the Keystone XL Pipeline. Senator BAUCUS of Montana said:

We need to put Montanans back to work and cannot afford further delays to the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Senator TESTER, also from Montana, said:

The Keystone Pipeline will create Montana jobs and it should not have to wait 14 months for an up-or-down decision.

Senator MANCHIN of West Virginia said:

I'm for the Keystone Pipeline . . . all the trade unions, everyone's for it. It creates thousands of jobs.

Senator BEGICH and Senator LANDRIEU have also written in support of the pipeline.

Until recently, President Obama suggested that he too believed the pipeline to be in the interests of the United States. On April 6, the President held a townhall event in Pennsylvania. There, he received a question about Canadian oil sands production. In response, the President of the United States discussed the Keystone XL Pipeline. This is what he said:

. . . importing oil from countries that are stable and friendly is a good thing. . . .

Let me repeat. The President of the United States said:

. . . importing oil from countries that are stable and friendly is a good thing. . . .

However, on November 10, the President reversed course, and he showed a different side. After protests from environmentalists, the President decided to punt his decision on the pipeline until after the 2012 Presidential election.

Many in the press say the President delayed his decision so that environmental activists would turn out on election day to support him. If true, the President's decision to delay the

approval of the pipeline was not only political, it was also cynical—cynical because these environmental activists believe they can shut down Canadian oil sands production. They believe they can shut down the production by stopping construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline. It simply is not true, and the President knows it. But maybe the President does not want to be honest with these environmental activists. Maybe he just doesn't want to disappoint them. He doesn't want his political base to stay home on election day.

But don't take it from me; consider what Austan Goolsbee had to say. Many Members of this Chamber know he is the former Chairman of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, this White House Council—President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers. This is what he said:

It is a bit naive to think that the tar sands would not be developed if they don't build that pipeline.

Eventually, it's going to be built. It may go to the Pacific, it may go through Nebraska, but it is going to be built somewhere.

Again, Mr. Goolsbee was President Obama's top economic adviser.

Why are the Canadian oil sands going to be developed? Because the oil sands are a huge national asset for Canada, and Canada will not allow that asset to be stranded.

Let's consider the findings of the Canadian Research Institute. This is an independent, not-for-profit research entity that was established in 1975. Its mission is to provide relevant, independent, and objective economic research on energy and environmental issues.

This June, they released a report. It was entitled "Economic Impacts of Staged Development of Oil Sands Projects in Alberta from 2010 to 2035"—a 25-year future look. This report looked at a variety of scenarios, including one in which no new pipeline capacity is built. Under that scenario, the institute estimated that the total impact on Canada's GDP would be about \$2.3 trillion over those 25 years. It also estimated that the compensation for Canadian employees will reach almost \$650 billion over this same period. It estimated that the direct, indirect, and induced employment in Canada will grow from 390,000 jobs to a peak of 490,000 jobs in 2020, just 9 years from now. It also estimated that the royalties to Alberta will go from approximately \$3.6 billion in 2010 to a peak of \$22.6 billion in 2020—in 10 years, from \$3.6 billion to \$22.6 billion in royalties to Alberta.

Again, the Canadian Energy Research Institute made all of these estimates assuming that no additional pipeline capacity will be built. What do these estimates mean? They mean Canada will continue to develop its oil resources whether or not Keystone XL Pipeline or any other pipeline is built. It means the environmental activists

trying to shut down oil sands production are naive at best.

It also means that the President, President Obama, is once again failing to lead, that he once again is failing to be forthright with the American people, and that he is unwilling and failing to make difficult decisions. The President is showing that he thinks his job is really the only job that matters.

Of course we all know Canada will not sit idly by. Canada will add additional pipeline capacity whether or not Keystone XL Pipeline is built.

Canada's Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, has said that the decision to delay approval of Keystone XL Pipeline demonstrates "the necessity of making sure that we're able to access Asian markets for our energy products." That is what the Canadian Prime Minister had to say. He was just in Washington last week. Alberta's Premier, Alison Redford, said that the decision to delay approval of the pipeline "is a clear reminder about the strategic importance of diversifying our export markets." "A clear reminder about the strategic importance of diversifying our export markets." In other words, Canada has a tremendous amount of oil, and Canada will ensure that its oil is brought to market. It may go to the United States, it may go to China, it may go to another country, but Canada's oil will be brought to market.

Thus, the question for President Obama is very simple, very straightforward: Is it in America's interests to reduce our dependence on oil from the Persian Gulf and from Venezuela? Is it in America's interest to create tens of thousands of new jobs at a time of 8.6 percent unemployment? The answer is abundantly obvious. The answer, of course, is, yes, it is in America's best interests to reduce our dependence on oil from the Persian Gulf and Venezuela. It is in America's interest to create tens of thousands of new jobs at a time of 8.6 percent unemployment.

It is time that the President starts to say yes and stops saying no to jobs and to energy—yes to energy security, yes to tens of thousands of new good-paying jobs.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, I seek recognition in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

#### PAYROLL TAX CUT

Mr. LAUTENBERG. Mr. President, we are at a time in the calendar that usually is a time of excellent anticipation. Christmas is coming. The holidays are coming. People are trying to

get their families in order, do the shopping, and all the things we have to do. It would seem this is a moment of fairly happy days and the holiday season is here. But these are not happy times for many Americans.

Across our country, families are fighting to keep their heads above water. Some parents do not know how they are going to put food on the table tonight, much less presents under the Christmas tree or during the Hanukkah holidays. That is why our side of the aisle is fighting to continue and expand a tax cut that has benefited millions of working families this year. This is a tax cut for people who need it—families who depend on a paycheck. With the payroll tax cut, the typical family in my State, the State of New Jersey, would receive an extra \$40 a week, starting next year. That is what a typical household in the Northeast pays for gasoline or health care each week.

Mr. President, \$40 a week adds up to \$2,100 a year. For parents who are struggling—as many are—to make ends meet, an extra \$2,100 goes a long way to help buy groceries or pay the electric bill or purchase medicines. It can help pay for childcare, preschool or college tuition—the necessities that help ensure children succeed in life.

To make sure all working families continue receiving this much needed relief next year, we are asking America's millionaires—people who earn over \$1 million a year—to pay their fair share of what the country needs to get ourselves back into reasonable balance. But the Republicans will not even allow us to vote on a bill that their colleagues in the House approved last night.

I wish to just spend a minute here. The House passed a bill last night. It included tax relief for some and we should take it here and consider it. But the Republicans will not even let us bring up the bill that passed in the House last night, and there is a question as to why. Why will they not let us do it? There is, obviously, a hidden meaning.

But what we see is, the Republicans are acting like Scrooges. This picture I have in the Chamber shows a mean-looking guy, as we see. That is what they want to do for Christmas.

For GOP Scrooges, this is not the season of giving; it is time to take things away. He said: No payroll tax cut for you this year.

They want to take away the tax cut for ordinary working families. The Republican Scrooges want to take away unemployment insurance benefits for 1 million people—imagine, people who are dependent on unemployment insurance at times when they are out of work, to help sustain their families, put food on the table, to try and just keep their heads above water. But that does not matter to our friends on the Republican side.

Today in America there is only one job available for every four unem-

ployed people. This is not the time to cut unemployment benefits.

Republicans also want to weaken safeguards that keep our air clean—filling our atmosphere with poisons and endangering the health of our children. They want to weaken those safeguards.

To add insult to injury, the Republicans are also trying to ram through a massive pipeline that will carry toxic materials into our country—toxic materials. We are so conscious of what damage the toxic environment can do to our families, to our children. But they want to have a pipeline that will carry toxic materials into our country. They want to make it easier for coal-fired industrial facilities to foul the air, spew toxins into our neighborhoods.

It is hard to believe. Instead of gifts, the Republican Scrooges want lumps of coal in the stockings and coal pollution in our lungs.

In many families, it is a tradition to teach children to welcome Santa Claus during the holidays. This year, we are going to tell our kids to hide away from the Republican Scrooges. We are not going to alarm our children and tell them things that are difficult may be even more difficult if some tax relief that is proposed for working-class families is not available to them.

The Republican priorities are different. They want to raise taxes on middle-class families—families who work for a living—to protect luxuries for millionaires: nice boats, airplanes. I do not mind—they have made the money; it is what they buy with it—but at least carry their fair share of our financial needs in this country.

The Republican priorities say they are for lower taxes, but that only goes for the jet set. When it comes to cutting taxes for working families, the Republican mantra is: Hey, we have to take care of the wealthy. We have to watch out for the wealthy, make sure they are OK. Don't ask them to carry more of the load. It is not a good time to deal with them. After all, maybe they will be big contributors to our political campaigns.

Let's not kid ourselves. American millionaires do not need help. They do not need the Republicans' help. Since the 1980s, our country's wealthiest 1 percent of the working people have seen their average household income increase by 55 percent. Let me restate that. Since the 1980s, our country's wealthiest 1 percent have seen their average household income increase by 55 percent—enormous—but for the bottom 90 percent average household income has not increased at all. As a matter of fact, it has gone down because the cost of living has gone up much faster than even any raises that come through.

Even though incomes are growing for the very wealthy, their tax rates are actually going down. Their taxes are going down. We can also look at the chief executive officers to see how well the wealthy are faring.

CEOs at the largest companies are now paid an average salary of \$11 million a year. Note that. The largest companies' CEOs are now paid an average salary of \$11 million a year. That is 343 times as much as the average worker's salary of \$33,000 a year. This comparison is so hard to reconcile. The CEOs of the largest companies have an average salary of \$11 million a year, and the average worker's salary is \$33,000 a year. Where is the equity in this? When we send the people out to fight, put on the country's uniforms, do the jobs, build the foundations, make sure the country is strong—\$33,000 a year. That is tough.

Just a few decades ago, the pay gap between CEOs and workers was much more modest. The CEOs—again, the CEO, people at the top of these companies—were paid an average of 42 times as much as the average worker, as we see on this chart. The chart demonstrates that in the 1980s, the CEOs made 42 times the average worker's pay. So the difference was not that obvious or that big. In 2010, CEOs made 343 times the average worker's pay. There is no equity there.

I come from the corporate world, and I know what big salaries are. I have seen it in my own company. But the one thing you have to do is at least encourage the people who are working for you to understand that they have a chance in life to provide the things we all talk about for our children—a college education, the prospect of a decent job, the prospect of being able to take care of our own family.

The numbers make it clear: Our goal should not be protecting millionaires. They do not need our help. We should be focused on protecting Medicare, food safety, home heating for the poor, and Head Start for little kids who have a first chance to learn—to learn—to understand education, to see how important it is to learn, to start reading books at an early age, to start having conversations with their parents about what is going on in this world.

They want to take those children out of the Head Start facility—so many of them, 200,000; it has been proposed in some of the House budgets—take them out of the Head Start school.

But our Republican colleagues do not want to hear about that. They continue asking the poor, the middle class, the elderly, and our children to bear the entire burden of these tough times.

The Republicans now remind me of what accountants are like. They are people who are obsessed, obligated to deal with the bottom line. There is no soul, no humanity, no compassion—not around here—unless it is for the wealthy. They have compassion for themselves.

Let's be clear: It does not hurt those of us who have been successful to pay our fair share. I remind those within my voice, who hear me, we have two wars going on. We have people paying a terrible price to serve our country's needs—a terrible price. This is a time

for those who are fortunate enough to make above \$1 million to say: Hey, I want to help carry this burden. I do not want to ask people who are scratching for a living—just trying to make ends meet—I do not want to ask them to do more without saying I want to do my share.

I was lucky. I ran a very big company. I want to do my share. That is why I am here. That is what I am talking about. To those who make more than \$1 million a year, I say: Look in the mirror. Ask yourself if you could succeed without help from anyone else or did your country help you achieve your prosperity. Was it people who built the buildings and built the infrastructure and manned the jobs all across the country—service jobs? They built the foundation upon which those who make \$1 million a year build their futures, build their fortunes. That is what happens. But there is not the respect for the hard-working families that we like to see.

I ask our Republican colleagues, think about the true meaning of the holidays.

It is not Halloween, it is not trick or treat, because otherwise that is what the game looks like. This time of the year is about coming together, caring about your fellow man. This should be a season of giving, not taking away the necessities from our country's most vulnerable.

We all remember at the end of a "Christmas Carol" when Ebenezer Scrooge opened his heart and became a hero. We need the same kind of miracle here in Congress. We need the Republican scrooges to have a change of heart and work with us to help our fellow Americans this holiday season. We need them to help us continue and expand the tax cuts for working families. We need them to help us continue unemployment insurance benefits for the jobless and clean air safeguards for our children. We need them to help us protect the programs that benefit the people who need them most, whom we need to keep our foundation strong.

To our Republican colleagues, we say, come on, let's work together. Let's do this. Let's put the acrimony aside. Let's put the selfishness aside and say, those who work every day for a living and try to keep things together—and we have millions of people who are looking for jobs who cannot find them right now—let's work together to make sure our children and grandchildren inherit an America that is even stronger than the one we inherited. Show the heart of America. That will be the best gift we can ever give them.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, there are no more important issues for middle-class families across America than jobs and the economy. This is what

they want their elected officials to be focused on. It is exactly what I think we ought to be working on every single day. That is why I have come to the Senate floor again and again to urge my Republican colleagues to stop blocking our attempts to extend and expand the middle-class tax cut so many of our families are counting on. That is why I come to the floor once again today to discuss the urgent need to maintain Federal unemployment benefits for middle-class families across our country. This should be an easy issue.

Unemployment benefits provide a lifeline for millions of families, and it would be simply wrong to cut off this support while the economy continues to struggle and so many of our workers are having so much trouble finding work. Right now, there are more than four unemployed workers for every single job opening. If every opening were filled tomorrow, we would still have more than 10 million workers across the country without a job to even apply for.

Additionally, nearly half of all unemployed workers have been out of a job for 6 months or longer, which is higher than we have seen for more than 60 years.

So millions of Americans are unemployed today, not because they do not want to work and not because they do not have valuable skills but simply because they find themselves in an economy that is not creating jobs as quickly as we need it to. Those unemployed workers are desperate to get back on the job. Unemployment benefits make all the difference for them and their families while they scour the want ads and pound the pavement and send out resume after resume after resume.

I recently sent a letter to my constituents asking for their stories about what these benefits actually mean to them and their families. The response to that was unbelievable. Within a few days, I received hundreds of e-mails. People sent me videos. They sent me pictures of their families. I received story after story from workers and families from across my home State of Washington who are fighting to make ends meet in this very tough economy and who cannot afford to have the rug pulled out from underneath them.

One of those stories came from a woman named Vicki, who lives in Maple Valley, WA. She was an unemployed single mom, lost her apartment, and told me she now has to share a room with her son in a relative's home. Vicki told me she has made every effort—going to interviews, sending out her resumes to hundreds of employers, still not able to find a job.

She understands that in this economy finding a job will not be easy, but she is going to keep trying, and the support she receives from unemployment benefits has kept her and her family afloat and made all of the difference. She said those benefits allowed her to put food on the table for her

family and gas in her car so she could go to job interviews. She told me, "If I lose my unemployment benefits, I do not know what I will be able to do to provide for my son."

She is not alone. I heard from older Americans such as Judy. She is a grandmother of five from Bothell, WA. Judy told me she had been working for 47 years before being laid off from her teaching job in 2009. She said over the last 12 years she has worked to teach adults the skills they need to move into jobs as bookkeepers and receptionists and schedulers. But in this economy, although she was an expert in her area, even she cannot find a job in those fields.

She wrote to me, saying:

I want to work, but nobody will hire older citizens no matter how much experience they have. I started looking for a job at the pay level I was at when I was laid off. But after being unemployed now for 2 years, I am even looking at jobs for less than half of that. Still I am told my experience does not match their requirements.

For Judy, unemployment benefits are not the solution. She wants a job. But they provide her with some critical support while she looks for that last job before she can retire.

I also heard from Sheila from Bellevue, WA. Like Judy, she is close to retirement, but she was laid off last year from an engineering technician job that she told me she loved and now she is desperate to get back to work. After sending out over 500 resumes since then, she has had 4 interviews. In her e-mail to me, Sheila wrote:

I was devastated when I was laid off. I now look for work 7 days a week. I have worked hard my entire life. I do not want everything I have worked for to disappear.

She told me that is what would happen if her unemployment benefits run out now.

Finally, I received a video message from Scott in Olalla, WA. Scott told me that after working at the same company for 20 years, he was laid off in March and filed his first unemployment claim in the 30-plus years he has been in the workforce. He said he always thought unemployment insurance was for the other people, never thought he would be the one collecting it. Now he calls it a godsend for him and his family. In his video, Scott told me about the uncertainty his family would face if his benefits expired before he could get back on the job. If this happens, Scott said:

I cannot imagine what it would do to my family to lose our home. We spend our money wisely. We live well within our means. But if we lost our home, we would be just another statistic. The last thing I want to do is to explain to my wife and my daughter that we have to leave our home.

That is exactly what he said would happen if he loses his unemployment benefits in this tough economy.

Those are just a few of the many stories I have received. There are so many of them out there. Millions of the people across America, including about 100,000 in my home State of Washington, will stand to lose their benefits